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ABSTRACT

Adult basic education practitioners in Florida are being faced with new work force development program requirements as a result of recent legislation. This technical assistance paper is designed to provide local adult education administrators and teachers with information to help them to implement Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Workplace Readiness Skills programs more effectively. The paper addresses the following areas: (1) courses for ABE students, related definitions, and course progression; (2) student eligibility, assessment, and accountability; (3) student services including initial intake, orientation, retention, and follow-up; (4) classroom instruction, including curriculum frameworks and alternative assessments; and (5) staff development. A directory of technical assistance directors and consultants organized by the five regions of the state, and a state-level staff directory are included in the paper. (KC)



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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PAPER FOR

Adult Basic Education Program

Prepared by:

**ADULT GENERAL EDUCATION
TASK FORCE OF PRACTITIONERS
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



Florida Department of
Education
www.firn.edu/doe

Tom Gallagher
Commissioner of Education

ADULT EDUCATION

A Gateway to the Good Life

VISION

All adult education, workforce development, literacy education, community education, and community involvement programs and activities in Florida are delivered through a cost-effective and accountable process by qualified practitioners.

MISSION

The Practitioners' Task Force (PTF) will provide qualified practitioners in Florida the opportunity to consistently review critical program issues and recommend appropriate action plans relative to improving, restructuring, and accountability components for adult education, workforce development, literacy education, community education, and community involvement programs and activities.

I value the work these practitioners have done, because they provide insight as to what is needed and what is happening in adult education. The positive results of the effort of our Practitioners' Task Force committees have been clearly demonstrated to state and federal policy makers.

*Joe Stephens
Director*

*Division of Workforce Development
Florida Department of Education*

Adult Basic Education

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Adult Basic Education

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

Practitioners in Florida are being faced with new workforce development program requirements as a result of recent legislation. This technical assistance paper will provide local adult education administrators and teachers with information to more effectively implement Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Workplace Readiness Skills programs. The following areas are addressed:

- Courses for Adult Basic Education students, related definitions, and course progression;
- Student eligibility, assessment, and accountability;
- Student services including initial intake, orientation, retention, and follow-up;
- Classroom instruction—curriculum frameworks and alternative assessments;
- Staff development; and
- Suggested materials and resources for implementing ABE and Workforce Readiness Skills.

TERMINOLOGY

Adult Basic Education – Courses of instruction designed to improve the employability of the state's workforce through instruction in mathematics, reading, language, and workforce readiness skills at grade-level equivalency 0.0 - 8.9

Adult Basic Education (ABE) – District program number/Florida Course Code Directory: (9900000)
Community College program number: (CIP 1532.0102000)

ABE Comprehensive – A course that includes language, mathematics, and reading from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9.

ABE Language – Language instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

ABE Mathematics – Mathematics instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

ABE Reading – Reading instruction at four levels from grade-level equivalency 0.0 to 8.9

Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Number – Number to designate community college programs and courses of instruction

Florida Course Code Directory – Document used by school districts for scheduling, reporting, and certification purposes; Adult General Education (AGE) is Section 6 of this directory

Literacy Completion Point (LCP) – Attainment of prescribed academic or workforce readiness skills which qualify the participant for further basic education, vocational education, or employment

SBER 6A-6.014 – State Board of Education Rule listing state-approved tests and assessment requirements for Adult General Education programs

Workplace Readiness Skills (ABE) – Employability skills instruction for ABE students

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSE MATRIX

Beginning July 1, 1998, Adult Basic Education (ABE) instruction has new programs and courses with new numbers which both school districts and community colleges must begin using. This includes courses of academic instruction— mathematics, reading, and language—with each academic course having Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) designated by letters corresponding to grade-level equivalencies as noted in the following course matrix. An ABE Comprehensive coverage including language, mathematics, and reading, was added on July 1, 1999. Students may not be enrolled in multiple literacy levels for the same subject area course of academic instruction.

Workplace Readiness Skills is a course structured for ABE students designed to provide and/or improve the employability of basic education students. ABE students may enroll in mathematics, reading, language, and workplace or ABE comprehensive and workplace simultaneously.

Workplace Readiness Skills is a course funded for ABE students designed to provide and/or improve the employability of basic education students.

Adult Basic Education Course Matrix

9900000 (District Program Number) CIP 1532.0102000 (Community College Program Number)

Course and Functioning Level	Program/Course Numbers Districts	CIP Numbers Community Colleges	Literacy Completion Points
Mathematics	9900001	CIP 1532.010200	
Basic Literacy			LCP-A 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Literacy			LCP-B 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Literacy			LCP-C 4.0 - 5.9
Functional Literacy			LCP-D 6.0 - 8.9
Reading	9900002	CIP 1532.010200	
Basic Literacy			LCP-E 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Literacy			LCP-F 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Literacy			LCP-G 4.0 - 5.9
Functional Literacy			LCP-H 6.0 - 8.9
Language	9900003	CIP 1532.010200	
Basic Literacy			LCP-AJ 0.0 - 1.9
Beginning Literacy			LCP-K 2.0 - 3.9
Intermediate Literacy			LCP-M 4.0 - 5.9
Functional Literacy			LCP-N 6.0 - 8.9
ABE Comprehensive	9900004	CIP 1532.010200	LCP-ABCDEFGHIJKMN 0.0 - 8.9
Workplace Readiness Skills (ABE)	9900060	CIP 1532.010500	LCP-A 6.0-8.9

(Note: Functioning levels are defined in the Federal Adult Education Act Performance Report DWD 333. See Appendix I of the Workforce Development Informational Services Database Handbook for more specific course reporting requirements.)

TRACKING STUDENT PROGRESSION IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION COURSES

Districts and community colleges must be able to track student completions at each Literacy Completion Point (LCP) after student achievement of mathematics, reading, language and workplace readiness standards as stated in the ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills Curriculum Frameworks. Completion and initial enrollment data must be collected and reported from initial student placement to completion of LCPs using Department of Education and Division of Community College data elements.

The *Workforce Development Education Database Handbook*, created by the Department of Education for school districts, and the *Student Database Data Element Dictionary* for community colleges, identify the data to be collected for tracking and reporting student performance. Both resources address the requirements of the Workforce Development Act of 1997 (Senate Bill 1688) as amended by the Florida Legislature in the Workforce Implementation Act of 1998 (Senate Bill 1124). Prior data elements modified as well as new elements are listed and described in these resources. Appendix I (Adult General Education Program/Course Numbers and Associated Literacy Completion Points), in the *Workforce Development Education Database Handbook for 1999-2000*, has been amended to include "Standard Course Lengths/Hours" for Adult Basic Education courses. The hours listed are the same hours recommended by the Commissioner's Task Force and included on the ABE Funding Matrix included in the Report to the Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education from the Task Force on Workforce Development Implementation of SB 1688. It is imperative that local adult education administrators and respective information services departments use these resources in preparation for reporting requirements.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY AND ASSESSMENT

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

RULE 6A-6.014(4), FAC, ACADEMIC SKILLS TESTS FOR ADULTS

State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014 lists the current state-approved academic skills tests that districts and community colleges must use for placement purposes.

During 1997-98, a Department of Education, Division of Workforce Development, Assessment Committee recommended revision of State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014, FAC, "General Requirements for Adult General Education Program," to expand assessment options for placement and documentation of progress for students. These changes were applicable to State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014(4), FAC, "Academic Skills Tests for Adults." The following information on "Student Placement" and "Student Progress" is based on the revised rule as adopted by the State Board of Education on November 24, 1998.

STUDENT PLACEMENT IN INSTITUTION

The most recent version of the following tests, English language versions only, are approved for placement of students in Adult General Education programs. The purpose of this initial assessment is to place adult education students into the appropriate literacy level as indicated on the ABE Course Matrix provided previously in this paper. Modifications may be made to accommodate adult students with disabilities.

- Adult Measure of Essential Skills (AMES)
- Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Complete Battery or Survey Form
- Tests of Adult Basic Education-Work Related (TABE-WR)
- Wonderlic Basic Skills Test (WBST)

If the above testing instruments do not meet the assessment needs of the adult students, one of the following alternative assessment instruments may be used:

- Adult Language Assessment Scales (A-LAS)
- Brigance Employability Skills
- Brigance Life Skills
- Comprehensive Test of Adaptive Behaviors (CTAB)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System - STRETCH (CASAS)
- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Test for Special Populations
- Kaufman Functional Academic Skills Test (K-FAST)
- Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) English as a Second Language Oral Assessment (ESLOA)

The Department of Education may approve additional assessment instruments as necessary. For additional information regarding SBER 6A-6.014, FAC, and assessment for Adult General Education, you may refer to the *Assessment Technical Assistance Paper* (DWD 99-5) available from the Division of Workforce Development.

Q: Who makes the decision about which test(s) will be used at the local level by districts and community colleges?

A: The choice of state-approved test(s) for a school district or community college is a local decision. Testing procedures, including instrument(s) selected, should be consistent within the school district or community college.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Documentation of student progress and educational gains is required for workforce development funding and accountability. The following methods, approved in State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014, FAC, may be used by districts and community colleges to document student progress:

- Criterion and/or norm-referenced pre, post, and progress tests previously listed and/or completion of an LCP. In order for the student to move from ABE to GED Preparation or Adult High School, it is recommended that the student be retested using one of the instruments in State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.014, FAC, to show appropriate placement at or above the 9.0 grade level. Refer to the test administrator's manual to ensure validity of pre and posttest results.
- Checklists/inventories based on the ABE Curriculum Frameworks for each LCP. The student must have completed each standard and documentation must be maintained.
- Performance-based portfolios including samples of student work and an evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of samples. The portfolio may contain works in progress, writing samples, open-ended or extended response exercises, or extended tasks.

Q: How is performance assessment different from other forms of testing?

A: These methods (above), like all types of performance assessments, require that students actively develop their approaches to the task under defined conditions, knowing that their work will be evaluated according to agreed-upon standards.

Q: How long do you have to maintain records?

A: Documents must be maintained until an auditing procedure is completed by the Auditor General, usually within a three-year period for school districts and seven years for community colleges.

AUDIT FILES AND INFORMATION/STUDENT FILES AND SCHOOL FILES

Audit reports shall be made annually in accordance with Section 216.349, F.S., and Section 10.600 of the Rules of the Auditor General to include:

- Facilities - attendance forms, course number, name, student ID;
- Enrollment/registration forms/student eligibility;
- Teaching certification/qualifications on file;
- Academic - documentation of initial intake/placement; progress of LCPs. (It is crucial that instructors realize the importance of accurately testing, placing students, recording and reporting LCPs to show progress, and maintaining student records.); and
- Documentation of students unable to test, exempted from testing, deferred from testing.

SERVICES FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

ORIENTATION AND PLACEMENT

Student orientation/counseling is an essential element in explaining the demands of the academic program. A clear understanding of expectations will better prepare the student for making sound decisions and successfully completing the program. It is important for students to understand the relationship between improving basic skills and successful job placement.

SUGGESTED STUDENT ORIENTATION TOPICS/RESOURCES

- Adult Education Student Handbook (provided to each student)
- School Mission Statement/ Philosophy
- School Calendar
- Attendance Policies
- Code of Student Conduct
- Student Registration and Enrollment Options
- Student Placement Testing
- Student Performance Evaluation
- Counseling/Student Services
- Realistic Goal Setting
- Student Recognition Programs
- Methods of Instruction (competency-based/performance-based)

It is important for students to understand the relationship between improving basic skills and successful job placement.

CAREER AND TRANSITION PLANNING

Regardless of age, educational/employment goals, or family economic circumstances, career/transition planning is an important component of every adult student's educational program. This is especially true if the individual has any special needs due to a disability, economic or academic disadvantage, or limited proficiency in the English language. Transition within the Adult Basic Education program would be mastering Literacy Completion Points and moving within (from lower to higher) the four literacy levels.

Transition (placement) from Adult Basic Education to other programs would include entry or advancement to:

- job training
- General Educational Development (GED) testing preparation instruction
- self-initiated employment
- a better job
- workplace readiness skills course
- Adult High School Credit program
- Postsecondary education (vocational-technical, community college, or university)

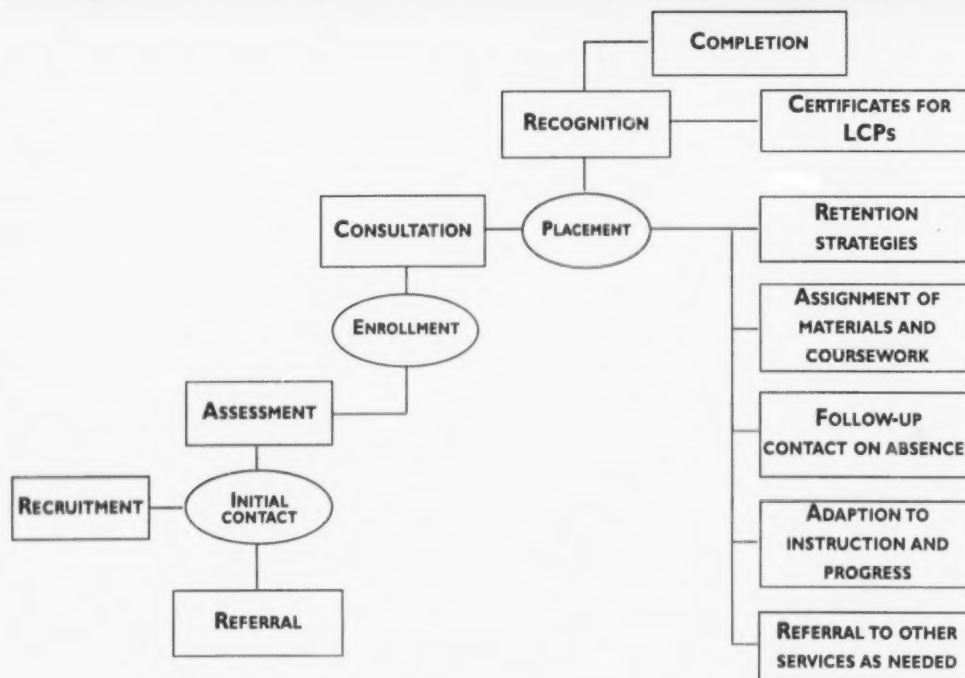
Regardless of age, educational/employment goals, or family or economic circumstances, career/transition planning is an important component of every adult student's educational program.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION/FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

Recruitment and retention activities are an important part of any Adult Education program. Suggested recruitment activities may include:

- contacting community leaders, network organizations, and agencies for student referrals;
- utilizing a variety of media sources such as local radio, TV, and newspaper; and
- using successful students to provide recruitment activities.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION FLOWCHART



A pilot test will be conducted to collect local supplemental adult learner follow-up information during the 1999-2000 school year. The Florida Education & Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP), located in the office of Workforce Education and Outcome Information Services (WEOIS), will conduct the pilot with a few LEAs. Guidelines for local implementation will be developed and disseminated following the pilot test for your use in future school years. The Workforce Development Education Funding formula will *not* include locally collected follow-up data on adult education students until this pilot test has been concluded and LEAs have been informed of guidelines.

COURSE SCHEDULING OPTIONS

Class time, date, location, and length are scheduling options that should be tailored to meet the needs of the institution and the community. District and community college policies and procedures should be taken into consideration.

Adult Basic Education **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

Classroom instruction varies among districts and community colleges. Therefore, it is appropriate to select a methodology for each individual local setting and environment. It is recommended that Adult Basic Education performance-based instruction incorporate applied academics, pure academics and work-force skills to ensure maximum student performance and preparation for postsecondary education and/or employment. Effective instruction should also include a variety of instructional strategies and resource materials. This should include technology, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, competency-based instruction, student-centered instruction, and teacher-directed instruction. Total integration of ABE instruction into content areas for vocational and workforce readiness requires that instructors be highly knowledgeable about intended outcomes. It is also important to ensure that students understand the relationship between basic skills and success in obtaining their goals.

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

The Adult Basic Education Curriculum Frameworks, with mathematics, reading and language performance standards, which are divided into Literacy Completion Points (LCPs), provide the instructor with intended student outcomes. This allows the instructor to better meet individual students' needs as instructional plans are established with students.

ABE Frameworks provide a minimal set of standards to be utilized statewide. The purpose of these frameworks is to provide basic literacy and life skills for adults who are performing at or below the 9th grade-level (0.0-8.9). The content develops basic literacy in the areas of mathematics, reading and language. Frameworks are the minimum performance standards developed by practitioners and adopted by the State to provide consistency and quality Adult Basic Education programs in Florida.

WORKPLACE READINESS SKILLS ABE FRAMEWORKS

The Workplace Readiness Skills ABE Frameworks provide the instructor with intended student outcomes designed to improve the employability of basic education students. The instructor may present topic-centered lessons that integrate skills from several standards. The content develops workplace readiness skills that help the student qualify for further basic education, vocational education, or employment. Documentation of completion of the standards indicates achievement of the Literacy Completion Point. Assessment using a state-approved assessment instrument is not required for placement and progress in this course.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What are the Literacy Completion Points (levels) in each adult basic education course?

A: There are four literacy levels in each academic course (mathematics, reading, and language). These levels are: *Level 1 Basic Literacy* (0.0 to 1.9); *Level 2 Beginning Literacy* (2.0 to 3.9); *Level 3 Intermediate Literacy* (4.0 to 5.9); *Level 4 Functional Literacy* (6.0 to 8.9).

Q: How many ABE subjects can each student be enrolled in simultaneously?

A: Students can enroll in Workforce Readiness and either the ABE comprehensive course or a maximum of three individual academic classes (reading, language, math). Students enrolled in individual academic courses may enroll in only one literacy level at a time in each course.

Q: How are ABE students placed in classes?

A: Students must be placed in one of the four LCP levels in each academic course or the ABE comprehensive course according to results on state-approved assessment instruments.

Q: How do students move from one LCP level to the next?

A: Students move from one LCP level to the next higher level when they have mastered the performance standards as designated in the curriculum frameworks. An approved assessment instrument, i.e., checklists, inventories, performance-based portfolios, and/or standardized tests must document performance. (Refer to the *Assessment Technical Assistance* paper, DWD 99-5.)

Q: What is the Literacy Completion Point (LCP) for Workplace Readiness Skills Course?

A: Course completion, attainment of workforce readiness skills, is achievement of the Literacy Completion Point. The computer skills are optional since access to computer technology may not be available to all students. However, it is strongly recommended that students with access to computer technology complete standard 9.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Effective staff development begins with marketing the changes in workforce development programs to local administrators, staff, teachers, students, and the community-at-large. It is essential that district and community college representatives statewide attend Division of Workforce Development state and regional training workshops in order to obtain critical information for dissemination and discussion with appropriate personnel in their respective districts or community colleges. The following methods of staff development and training have been suggested to the Division of Workforce Development for future distribution of information:

- Distance Learning
- Internet or on-line training
- CD-ROM
- Video conferencing
- Training (regional and statewide)
- Seminars
- Workshops
- Training manuals for distribution
- List of resources

Effective staff development begins with marketing the changes in workforce development programs to local administrators, staff, teachers, students, and the community-at-large.

S U M M A R Y

- Practitioners in Florida are being faced with new workforce development program requirements as a result of recent legislation. Beginning July 1, 1998, Adult Basic Education instruction has developed new programs and courses with new course numbers which both districts and community colleges must use. This includes three courses of academic instruction — mathematics, reading, and language — with each academic course having Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) corresponding to grade-level equivalences. Workplace Readiness Skills is a course funded for ABE students designed to provide and/or improve the employability of basic education students. Beginning July 1, 1999, an ABE comprehensive course was added. This course includes reading, language, and math from 0.0 to 8.9.
- Districts and community colleges must be able to track student completions at each Literacy Completion Point after student achievement of mathematics, reading, language and workforce readiness standards as stated in the ABE and Workplace Readiness Skills Curriculum Frameworks. The District *Workforce Development Education Data Base Handbook*, created by the Department of Education for school districts, and the *Student Data Base Data Element Dictionary* for community colleges identify the data to be collected for tracking and reporting student performance.
- ABE Frameworks provide a minimal set of standards to be utilized statewide. The purpose of these frameworks is to provide basic literacy and life skills for adults who are performing at or below the 9th-grade level (0.0-8.9). The content develops basic literacy in the areas of mathematics, reading, and language. Frameworks are the minimum performance standards developed by practitioners and adopted by the State to provide consistency and quality Adult Basic Education programs in Florida.
- The Workplace Readiness Skills Frameworks provide the instructor with intended student outcomes designed to improve the employability of basic education students. The instructor may present topic-centered lessons that integrate skills from several standards. The content develops workforce readiness skills that help the student qualify for further basic education, vocational education, or employment.

All task forces are coordinated by the practitioners' professional organization, Adult and Community Educators of Florida, Inc. (ACE).



Valorie Boyd, Executive Director
Ron Froman, Taskforce Coordinator
 Adult and Community Educators of
 Florida, Inc. (ACE)
 912 South Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
 Tallahassee, Florida 32301
 (850)222-2233 Fax: (850)222-0133

PRACTITIONERS' TASK FORCE FACILITATORS

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

Barbara Van Camp
 Leon County Schools
 283 Trojan Trail
 Tallahassee, FL 32311
 850-922-5343
 Fax: 850-922-5352

ADULT SECONDARY/GED/VPI

John Wigley
 Brevard County Schools
 2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way
 Viera, FL 32940
 407-633-1000 ext. 376
 Fax: 407-633-3520

DATA/MIS

Edythe Abdullah
 Florida Community College
 at Jacksonville
 501 W. State Street
 Jacksonville, FL 32202
 904-632-5049
 Fax: 904-632-3109

ESOL/CITIZENSHIP

Tony Lagos
 Orange County Schools
 445 W. Amelia Street
 Orlando, FL 32801-2839
 407-317-3200 ext. 2839
 Fax: 407-317-3343

VOLUNTEERS LITERACY/ COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Darlene Kostrub
 Palm Beach County
 Literacy Coalition
 551 SE 8th St., Suite 101
 Delray Beach, FL 33483-5183
 561-279-9133
 Fax: 561-265-3579

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY

**Florida Department of Education
Division of Workforce Development
Bureau of Program Improvement and Accountability
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400**

Bureau of Program Improvement and Accountability			
Loretta Costin	Bureau Chief	850/488-7153 SC 278-7153	Room 714
Sue Yates	Staff Assistant	850/487-4438 SC 277-4438	Room 714
Linda Palmer	Program Specialist	850/922-5021 SC 292-5021	Room 714
June Alford	Program Specialist GED Client Services <i>Temporarily Assigned</i>	850/488-6622 SC 278-6622	Room 634
Adult Education and GED Client Services			
Leatrice A. Williams	Program Director Adult Education	850/488-6191 SC 278-6191	Room 644
Jacqueline Batts	Program Specialist GED Client Services	850/488-6622 SC 278-6622	Room 644
Fredia James	Senior Word Processing Systems Operator GED Client Services	850/488-6622 SC 278-6622	Room 634
Karen James	GED Client Service Information Specialist <i>Temporarily Assigned</i>	850/488-6622 SC 278-6622	Room 634
TBA	Program Specialist Adult Education	850/487-6692 SC 277-6692	Room 644
Eugene Stafford	Program Specialist Adult Education	850/487-4258 SC 277-4258	Room 644
Winnie Tolliver	Staff Assistant GED Client Services	850/488-6191 SC 278-6191	Room 634

• TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY •

Region I -- Panhandle			
Bill Wargo	Regional Director	850/487-2582 SC 277-2582	Room 722
Denise Baril	Administrative Secretary	850/487-4327 SC 277-4327	Room 722
Tom Knox	Regional Consultant	850/487-1499 SC 277-1499	Room 722
Marilyn Hatch	Regional Consultant	850/487-9452 SC 277-9452	Room 722
Nancy Matheny-Evans	Regional Consultant	850/488-3668 SC 278-3668	Room 722
Sandra Burkholder	Regional Consultant	850/488-6070 SC 278-6070	Room 722
Region II -- Crown			
John Denmark	Regional Director	850/922-2890 SC 292-2890	Room 714
Christa Tedder	Administrative Secretary	850/487-3161 SC 277-3161	Room 714
Teresa Bestor	Regional Consultant	850/487-4440 SC 277-4440	Room 720
Rick Lockenbach	Regional Consultant	850/487-4093 SC 277-4093	Room 714
Patti Askins	Regional Consultant	850/488-0415 SC 278-0415	Room 714
Kenneth Plummer	Regional Consultant	850/922-6244 SC 292-6244	Room 714
Region III -- East Central			
Dorothy Bouie	Regional Director	850/487-0603 SC 277-0603	Room 714
Locester Presha	Administrative Secretary	850/487-6700 SC 277-6700	Room 714
Rose Raynak	Regional Consultant	850/487-0773 SC 277-0773	Room 720
TBA	Regional Consultant	850/487-1594 SC 277-1594	Room 720
Marcia Maxwell	Regional Consultant	850/487-3599 SC 277-3599	Room 720

• TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DIRECTORY •

Region 4 -- West Central

Ted Bruce	Regional Director	850/922-2534 SC 292-2534	Room 754
Kay Woolam	Administrative Secretary	850/487-3300 SC 277-3300	Room 720
Dwight Hyle	Regional Consultant	850/922-5829 SC 292-5829	Room 720
John McNeely	Regional Consultant	850/488-7933 SC 278-7933	Room 722
Ted Lane	Regional Consultant	850/487-6691 SC 277-6691	Room 720

Region V -- South East

Connie Hicks-Evans	Regional Director	850/487-0651 SC 277-0651	Room 722
Connie Rowan	Administrative Secretary	850/488-0118 SC 278-0118	Room 722
Ike Gibson	Regional Consultant	850/487-3272 SC 277-3272	Room 722
Leslie Thurman	Regional Consultant	850/487-0718 SC 277-0718	Room 722
Pamela Shrestha	Regional Consultant	850/488-3129 SC 278-3129	Room 722

TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP **ADULT BASIC EDUCATION**

Barbara Van Camp, Principal Facilitator Leon County School District	Melody Chaykin Broward County School District
Denise Horne, Director of Resources and Community Relations Goodwill Industries Big Bend, Inc.	Linda Fischer Broward County School District
Rose Martin Miami-Dade County School District	Kathleen Fontaine-Long Bay County School District
Glenda Anderson Orange County School District	Jack Newell Private Consultant
Jan Lichtenwalter Brevard County School District	Ellen Lauricella Leon County Public Library
Lynn Cunill Leon County School District	Mary Davis Washington-Holmes Vocational Technical Center
Barbara Jones Okaloosa-Walton Community College	Sheryl Walden Department of Corrections
Marilynn Stevenson Florida Community College at Jacksonville	Barbara Spears-Corbett Miami-Dade County School District
Joe Cardwell North Escambia Community School Coordinator	Sandra Davis Bay County School District

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tom Gallagher, Commissioner
Florida Department of Education

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Joseph E. Stephens, Director

Loretta Costin
Bureau Chief of Program Improvement
and Accountability

Leatrice A. Williams
Program Director, Adult Education Section

Gregory Downing
Education Policy Coordinator

FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
David Armstrong, Director

Lanny D. Larson
Deputy Executive Director for Workforce
Development

Dave Tranchand, Economic Development and
Occupational Education Specialist

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM
Robert Potsko, Program Specialist

Jane Silveria, Program Specialist

EDITORIAL SERVICES / GRAPHIC DESIGN
Florida Human Resources and Development, Inc.
K.D. Kinsley-Momberger

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CONTACT:

Leatrice A. Williams, Director
Adult Education Section
Florida Department of Education
Division of Workforce Development
325 West Gaines Street, Room 644
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
850-488-6191; SunCom 278-6191

FOR ADDITIONAL COPIES, SEND REQUEST TO:

Florida Department of Education
Division of Workforce Development
Bureau of Program Management and Development
325 West Gaines Street, Room 644
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400
1-800-342-9271 (In Florida only)
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